

Leader's Report

15 November 2017

Report of the Leader of the Council

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To present the Leader's report to Council.

This report is public.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To receive the report of the Leader of Council.

REPORT

1.0 Cabinet

Information on Cabinet matters is provided in the minutes from the Cabinet meeting held on 3 October 2017 later in this agenda.

2.0 Decisions required to be taken urgently

There are no decisions to report since the last Leader's Report on 27 September 2017.

3.0 Leader's Comments

A meeting with the Lancaster and Fleetwood MP, Cat Smith, took place on the 15 September. She was informed about progress on Canal Corridor North, the Local Plan and Bailrigg Garden Village, and the University of Lancaster Innovation Campus (A start on site of the latter is imminent). The Museums Review and the potential for a future regeneration project associated with archaeological findings. She asked about safety measures on our tower blocks and was assured that we do not have the same type of cladding as Grenfell Tower. The Fire Service have made some routine recommendations and we are actioning these. We have been asked by government to ensure that residential blocks, owned by private companies, are assessing their systems.

On the 18 September, I went to Chester with the Chief Executive, our Regeneration Officer and a party from "The Dukes", to look at the Storeyhouse Theatre in the City Centre. This is a conversion of an old Odeon Cinema and a modern extension. It has

only been open for about nine months so it was difficult to assess its financial success, but it was an amazing building conversion. It is being run as a community hub and it was very busy when we were there. It is open from early morning, till late evening. We were very impressed by the way that the building was organised with the latest modern technology. The visit was recommended by "The Dukes" team, to help discussions about the Arts Hub/Canal Corridor.

On the 19 September meetings at Preston of the District Leaders and the Lancashire Leaders took place. The first meeting discussed Business Rates Pooling, which we are not involved in. A paper from the District Councils Network was discussed. The paper was on an All Party Parliamentary Group for District Council Inquiry: Collaboration and Devolution and The Role of the District Councils in Devolution and Shaping the Future of Local Government.

The second meeting at County Hall was intended to be about agreeing to be a Lancashire Combined Association of Councils. However, the Chair began the meeting by speaking about a meeting with the Minister, Jake Berry, who had suggested that the Government were now considering a Combined Authority for Lancashire without a Mayor. There would be no devolved budgets, powers or functions with an Association, but with a Combined Authority without a Mayor there would be. Further discussion about what does it mean and what do members want, ensued. We were told that the LEP are supportive of any arrangement. Leaders around the room were asked their opinions and we all said that we needed clarity and to know the terms of reference and will it be the full deal and will it mean a change in legislation.

A LEP update and a Housing Commission presentation were also on the agenda and the LEP 3 Year Plan and Annual Report. They say that they are promoting Lancashire as well as funding growth and bringing new investment into Lancashire.

A Confucius Art Exhibition at The Storey on the same evening was a great pleasure to attend. The International Chinese artist's work is beautiful. He is based in Manchester where the Chinese Consulate is and the Consul attended. It was a very pleasant evening with The Mayor and Mayoress in attendance.

The 20 September saw the Minister, Jake Berry, visiting Morecambe. We met him at The Midland and he was very interested in projects that could regenerate the whole bay area.

The Chamber, Lancaster BID and Morecambe BID came to meet the Cabinet on the 03 October. The North Lancashire Expo, commercial property, and Greyhound Bridge closure were discussed. Emergency planning was also discussed. The Council updated them on Canal Corridor, new consultation on Housing figures. Frontierland and the Wave Reflection Wall, plus the Corporate Plan consultation.

On the 04 October the Morecambe Bay Group met in Lancaster Town Hall. We had a signing ceremony of the Collaboration Agreement and agreed a draft Morecambe Bay initiative 12 month Action Plan. Our common strengths are Energy, Health, Marine Engineering and our Tourism. Our Economic Development staff will visit each other's areas to build relationships and to seek further opportunities. It was agreed that officers would attend the MIPIM 2017 Business Exhibition in London which I am told was very successful.

The Inspire by Design presentation at The Storey on the 18 October showed a variety of Garden Villages since the '30s and one in Denmark. It was much appreciated by the audience.

I met Pam Barker, the Constable of the Castle and also a representative of the High Sheriff, on the 23 October. She comes regularly so that she can report back to him about the area. She was pleased to hear about the proposals for improving the district and for the opportunity to increase income rather than cutting services.

The best afternoon of the month was the "Celebrating Success Awards" for our own council employees. What a lovely atmosphere! Congratulation to HR for organising the occasion. It was much appreciated by all who attended and the feedback was excellent. I was told "we must do it again", and we certainly will.

Other Matters

Cabinet minutes for 3 October 2017 are attached at the end of this agenda.

4.0 Key Decisions

The following Key Decisions were taken by Cabinet on 3 October 2017:

- (1) Bailrigg Garden Village Governance Proposals
- (2) The 'Smart District' Connecting the Public Realm
- (3) Accountable Body Authorisation for Community Groups – Update

The following Officer Delegated Key Decisions were taken during this period:

- (1) Civica Financial Systems
- (2) Civica Icon Income Management System
- (3) Renewal of Fire Doors to 3 High Rise Flat Blocks

Background Papers

Cabinet agenda and minutes of the meetings held on 3 October 2017.